2: Howell M-5 (ca. 1908) 1908-1910
OC6 Iban OC6

THE SEA DYAK.

By The Revd. Wm. Howell.

174 The Sea Dyaks belong to the Malayan race. It is a fact unquestionable. Neither the Sea Dyaks nor the Malays in Sarawak could be termed the aborigines of the Island of Borneo. To satisfactorily trace anything as to their origin requires greater knowledge than I possess. It is the study of their language and that of the Malays that has led me to the conclusion that the Dyaks and Malays are akin.

The Sea Dyaks, it appears, migrated into this part of the Island of Borneo long before the Malays. It may be surmised that the causes of their migration were the compulsory conversion of Mohamed's successors, famine, or tribal wars. It is with them a natural habit to be always removing from one place to another. Their methods of farming and building of houses almost always compel them to live a wandering life. If there be lawsuits or disputes with regard to the ownership of land, the losing party will undoubtedly remove.

● 101 The meaning of the word Dyak is difficult to elucidate. Some say that it is a corruption of the word *darat* which means "inland" or "up country;" others say that the word is adopted from the Land Dyak word *daya*, which means "the people," and is equivalent to the Malay word *orang*. The derivation of the word Dyak is therefore an open question.

101 There is as yet no light thrown upon the matter which will lead us to any satisfactory conclusion
174 with reference to their nationality. The word *Daya* which is a word meaning either inland, or up country, or the people, gives us no assistance whatever towards the discovery of their nationality. But from studying their peculiarities and habits, it gives us just a chance to surmise without the aid of their traditions that they once had a name to express their nationality, but from what cause or reason their forefathers allowed it to die out in such a mysterious manner is better answered by my readers. The presumption that may be taken is this, that the peculiarity of the Sea Dyaks up to the present day is to call themselves by the name of the place or river they remove to or dwell in.

2: Howell M-5 (ca. 1908) 1908-1910
OC6 Iban OC6

173 If the Dyak account of their migration could be relied upon, it still gives us no help to trace them beyond the island of Borneo. They unanimously affirm that their forefathers removed here (*i. e.* the lower part and mouth of the Batang Lupar) from the very source of the Batang Lupar or main river. Let it be assumed as probable that their migration, which possibly took place about four or five centuries ago, began from the Dutch part of Borneo.

● 101 The Sea Dyaks consist of several tribes, and
197 which are the following, *viz*:—Batang Rajang, Uln Ai, Saribas, Sebuyau, Balau, Batang Ai, Undup, Skrang, Lemanak, Kumpang, Engkerbang, Kanowit, Katibas. If these tribes are subdivided again, they will number five times as many. Although they are divided into various tribes, yet they speak only one language, and this is the Malayan language. It is a significant fact that the Malayan language is the mother language of various tribes of people. Each tribe adopts its own idioms and pronunciations, and adds foreign words to its language to enrich it. Anyone who is not thoroughly conversant with the Malay and the Sea Dyak languages would find it difficult to detect their identity. The differences of tones and pronunciation to which each tribe has habituated itself would at first not be noticed by a stranger who would find it impossible to distinguish the language of one tribe from another.

192 The Sea Dyak language is similar to other languages which have grown rich in their vocabularies as

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OG6 Iban OG6

CHAPTER VI.

SEA-DYAKS—TRIBES OF LUNDU, SAKARRAN, AND SAREBAS—DYAK HOUSES—LANGUAGE, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITIONS—THE MANANG, OR VILLAGE DOCTOR—DRESS OF DYAKS AND OF THEIR WOMEN—SEVERAL OF THEIR CHIEFS—ANECDOTE OF ONE—HEAD-TAKING—GRATITUDE TO MR. BROOKE—PIRACY OF SEA-DYAKS—ITS SUPPRESSION—DYAK LAXITY OF MANNERS—THEIR LOVE OF THEIR CHILDREN—DUTIES AND LABOURS OF THE MEN AND WOMEN—CAPTIVE DYAK CHILDREN—COOKERY OF THE DYAKS—THEIR FUNERALS, AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

121 In pursuance of the plan it is our intention to follow in describing the inhabitants of the island in the order in which they are best known to us, which will nearly correspond also with their relative political importance, the Dyaks next present themselves to our notice, sufficient we trust having been said to give the reader a general idea of the Malays of the coast of Borneo, and to leave on his mind a more favourable impression of the character of some of them than the nation generally has hitherto enjoyed.

101 The Dyaks appear to be divided by many customs and usages naturally into two classes, which have been called by Mr. Brooke, Land and Sea Dyaks; the latter appear to have been the more savage and powerful, the former 121 the more quiet and easily managed. Amongst the sea Dyaks the practice of preserving the heads of their enemies, anciently instituted that they might be kept

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

some other tribes, wear brass-wire above the elbow joint. The women of the Sebooyoh and other tribes wear in their ears ornaments of gold or silver, which are of such an extent of surface as entirely to conceal that organ: like the bracelets, the pattern is stamped upon them from the back, and the thin plate is soldered to a small tube which passes through the hole pierced in the ear, and is fastened by a nut in the manner of the more elegant ear-ornaments of the Malayan women before described. When about their household employments, these ornaments and this dress are generally worn by the females, but when they pursue their out-door duties a jacket similar to that of the men, but of a little finer texture, envelopes the upper part of their persons, and protects them from the thorns of the jungle. In the house they wear no head-dress, but abroad a large hat, made of coloured rattans very finely woven, protects them from the weather: in size it approaches that of the market-women of Bruni, but is more peaked at the top, and of a much more elegant appearance.

From the little friendly intercourse between the town of Sarawak, and the Sarebas, and Sakarran Dyaks, I have not been able to collect such accurate details as I could have wished respecting the government established amongst the people of these rivers, which differs considerably from that of the hill tribes, and more nearly approaches that of the orang Kyan, to the eastward of them, in many of their institutions.

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

The sea Dyaks appear to form a connecting link between the land tribes and the Kyans, showing that they are all of the same family; and, perhaps, these three great and distinct divisions are but the descendants of three different emigrations at periods remote from each other, and when peculiar causes might have altered, as we now see them, the characters of each. All the tribes of Sarebas, though each has its particular chief, acknowledge in war the authority of the orang kaya Pa-mancha; but it does not appear that, excepting when his orders and instructions agree with their own wishes, the petty chiefs, who command their own boats and the people of their own villages, pay particular attention to them, but still they always look up to this old man—who has distinguished himself by his bravery—with respect, and his opinion possesses great weight in their councils, more particularly, as, from his sanguinary nature, and the long practised custom of taking heads, his store of which he is always anxious to increase, the counsels of peace are seldom those he offers to the nation.

In Sakarran they have several chiefs of great authority; that part of the country which lies nearest to the sea is under the authority of one head chief, named Gasing: he is a man in the prime of life, a very sensible and fine-looking fellow; and is, I believe, anxious to be at peace with the English, but finds it impossible to control his followers, and the other chiefs of tribes, who are of a different opinion. At a council, which met at the junction of the Sakarran

6: Freeman E 5 (1949-1951) 1958 OC6 Iban OC6

THE FAMILY SYSTEM OF THE IBAN OF BORNEO

By J. D. FREEMAN

INTRODUCTION

The Iban [1]—with whose family system this essay is concerned—are a people of western Borneo. They are to be found, for the most part, among the remote, jungle-covered ranges of the undeveloped interior zone of Sarawak, and also in certain of the inaccessible headwaters of the great Kapuas river, in what is now Kalimantan or Indonesian Borneo.

In the judgement of A. C. Haddon, the Iban are Oceanic Mongols, and they belong to an ethnic stock which he has termed Proto-Malay (Haddon and Start 1936: 1). In brief, they are a brachycephalic people (average c.i. 83), of short stature (average height of males, 5 ft. 2½ in.), with lank, black hair, cinnamon coloured skins, and typically Mongoloid features.

Iban culture is also fundamentally proto-Malayan in type. In particular, the Iban language has many close affinities with Malay, and Howell, a leading authority, classes Iban as 'a dialect of the wide spreading Malay language'. The Iban language has not, however, been influenced by Arabic; nor have Iban culture and social institutions been appreciably affected by Islam.

In Sarawak today, the Iban are the predominant element in a highly heterogeneous population. The total population of Sarawak as disclosed by the census of 1947 was 546,385, and of this number 190,326 (or 34·8 %) were Iban. Sarawak, like so many of the other countries of south-east Asia, has a plural society. Along the coast, among the deltaic swamps and in the low-lying country bordering the tidal reaches of the rivers, one finds the main centres of Malay, Chinese and Melanau settlement. Further inland, amid steep and tangled ranges drained by swift-flowing streams and rivers, live the indigenous hill peoples: the Land Dayaks, the Iban, the Kayan, the Kenyah, the Kajang and others, all of them with subsistence economies based on the shifting cultivation of dry rice.

In particular, this essay is concerned with the Ulu Ai Iban of the Baleh river of the Third Division of Sarawak. The Baleh enters the great Rejang river, from the west, at a point about 170 river miles from the sea, and along its banks and those of its numerous tributaries (the Sut, Mujong, Gat and Merirai being the most important of them), there are scattered some 133 Iban communities with a total population of about 11,500. Almost all of these

6: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951) 1958 OC6 Iban OC6

592 required. This presents them with greater opportunities for meeting nubile females and settling down in other areas. The inducement for such males to return to a 582 large *bilek* family is not so great.

(3) All Iban apartments are of about the same size. As a large family grows up living in this confined space becomes increasingly uncongenial. For members of large families out-marriage is the easiest avenue of escape. (Partition is a much more difficult operation, for other members of the sibling group may offer opposition, etc.)

(4) The aim of most Iban men and women is to possess a *bilek* of their own. This confers the independence which is dear to every Iban's heart. Out-marriage is an easier avenue to this independence than partition.

PARTITION

The incidence of partition exhibits a tendency to progressive decrease as the size of sibling groups progressively increases. (E.g. from an average incidence of 44% in the case of sibling groups of two to three members to an average incidence of 21% in the case of sibling groups of five and over.)

SUGGESTED EXPLANATIONS

These, in general, are the converse of what has been said for out-marriage.

When a sibling group is small in size (two to three members) the share of the family estate available to a sibling is sufficiently large (i.e. one-half to one-third) to provide strong inducement. As a sibling group increases in size, however, the share available to a sibling desiring partition becomes progressively less, so offering less inducement towards partition. Because of this, out-marriage offers stronger inducements as the size of the sibling group increases. So the incidence of partition decreases and the incidence of out-marriage increases as the size of the sibling group increases.

NOTES

● 101 [1] The Iban are also sometimes called Sea Dayaks. In Sarawak it so happened that the first Iban with whom the British came into contact (in the early 1840's) were certain groups of warriors, who, in league with Malays, had become addicted to coastal piracy. Understandably enough they were given the name of Sea Dayaks. However, from an ecological point of view the term Sea Dayak is inaccurate and misleading: the vast majority of the Iban have always been a hill people, living many miles from the coast, and their economy is essentially an agricultural one. The name Iban (which was introduced to ethnographical literature by Haddon in 1901) has now achieved general acceptance (Haddon 1901: 325).

080 [2] For an account of the Iban migrations into the Baleh region see Freeman 1955: 11 ff.

[122] [3] I would like to express my most sincere thanks to the Colonial Social Science Research Council under whose auspices my field research was carried out.

[4] *Kami* is the personal pronoun: we, plural (excluding the person or persons addressed).

[5] Temenggong Jugah, of Sungai Merirai, Baleh region. Temenggong Jugah was one of the Colony of Sarawak's representatives at the Coronation of Her Majesty

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

CHAPTER II

THE DYAKS

The word "Dyak"—Other native races in Sarawak—*Milanaus*—*Kayans*—*Kinyehs*—Cruelty—*Ukits*—*Bukitans*—*Punans*—*Seru*—Sea Dyaks—Land Dyaks—The appearance of the Sea Dyak—Men's dress—Tattooing—Women's dress—*Rawai*, or corset—The teeth—Depilation—Language.

THE derivation of the word "Dyak" is uncertain. Some think it is derived from *daya*, which in the Brunei Malay dialect means "inland," "interior." Others derive it from the Land Dyak word *daya*, which means "a man." Whatever may be the derivation, it is quite incorrect to apply it to all the inland races of Borneo. There are many tribes, such as the *Kayans*, *Muruts*, *Ukits*, and *Punans*, who are not Dyaks at all, their language, customs, and traditions being quite different.

Before describing the Dyaks, some mention must be made of the other native races to be found in Sarawak. They are the *Milanaus*, *Kayans*, *Kinyehs*, *Muruts*, *Ukits*, *Bukitans*, *Punans*, and *Seru*.

The *Milanaus* are a quiet people who keep very much to themselves. They are not Mohammedans, although they dress like the Malays. They are an important tribe, and are to be found in large numbers at Matu, Oya, Muka, and Bintulu. They plant paddy and cultivate sago on a large scale. They are skilled in working iron, and are

10: Sandin 1-5 (1949-1955) 1956 OC6 Iban OC6

The Westward Migration of the Sea Dayaks.

by BENEDICT SANDIN*

(*edited by* TOM HARRISSON)

Editorial Introduction:

This paper is a highly condensed version of complex processes which led a great people from the south-east of Borneo right across the spine of the island and down to the South China Sea —where, when they met Europeans as pirates in the last century, they earned their present common name, Sea Dayak. Benedict Sandin started work on compiling this material systematically in 1949, at my suggestion, because there was a serious risk of these traditions dying out unrecorded. But long before that Sandin —who comes of good family and traces descent direct from the culture hero of all "true" Sea Dayaks, Sengalang Burong (see genealogy I, below)—could recite many of these "*tusut*" himself as a boy of 10. The new generations no longer are so taught.

Working together, mildly, we had rather a lot of trouble fitting the data, based on genealogies and folklore, into some intelligible pattern. A mass of material was collected by Sandin and studied. At one stage we had a fair-size book in manuscript draft. But, while impressive as raw data, it was pretty indigestible stuff. Part of the trouble was that Sandin was working at whole-time jobs in the country and we could seldom get together to correlate his own Dayak knowledge and my western sense of literary discipline and presentation. Happily, by 1954, I was able to get Benedict transferred to the Museum, where he is now Junior Assistant Curator. This promised more rapid progress on a project which had long seemed to me priority. However, through the very good offices of Dr. W. R. Geddes (author of "*The Land Dayaks*" and now Lecturer in Anthropology at Auckland University) he soon got a UNESCO scholarship to New Zealand, where, under the wise supervision of Dr. Gilbert Archey and other Museum friends,

*Mr. Sandin is now on the staff of the Sarawak Museum (see text).

10: Sandin I-5 (1949-1955) 1956 OC6 Iban OC6

Summary of Tusut and other data to date.

173 As far back to the days of Sengalang Burong, great hero of the Sea Dayaks, these people had lived along the Kapuas and its tributaries in South-east (now Indonesian) Borneo (see Genealogy I). His grandson Surong Gunting was said to live somewhere on the Tiang Laju Range, between the upper Marup and Undup headwaters on the west side of the central watershed (now in Sarawak).

173 101 All the Sea Dayaks, being the descendants of Sengalang Burong, have broadly the same language and custom. On the other hand the Land Dayaks (such as Selakau, Rara, Remun, Dempu, Singgai, Kuap and others) are in a different category from the Sea Dayaks. The Land Dayaks do not celebrate the "Gawai Burong" (bird) festival, due to the fact they are *not* the descendants of Sengalang Burong, the founder of the cult. They speak another language.

173 167 While Surong Gunting was still living in Merakai (one of the tributaries of the Kapuas) before he migrated west to Tiang Laju, he held a historic conference to organize the migration routes to Batang Ai (see Genealogies I and II.)

It was from Merakai that an ancestor, Kajup, was ordered (by Surong Gunting) to lead his followers to migrate and settle in the Undup River, whose mouth is just above Simanggang. Next to him another, Jelian, moved from Merakai to the Undup and lived at Wong Tempangu. From this village Jelian married a woman named Tiong, daughter of the famous Kantu chief.

A few years later another chief named Gelungan came out of Merakai, to lead his followers to live in Undup; but later he moved again with his people to live at Balau Hill, not far below the present town of Simanggang. Because Balau Hill was the first settlement where those people lived, they call themselves "Balau Dayak" to this day. In the same manner, those who inhabited the Undup River call themselves "Undup Dayak".

While living at Balau Hill, Gelungan married a woman named Sendi; and soon after this marriage he left his original followers, and moved to Balu Sebuyau, a branch of the Batang Lupar, near

10: Sandin I-5 (1949-1955) 1956 OC6 Iban OC6

173 this son and Tindin's own daughter, in order that peace could be restored between the Dayak and Bukitan. "But", he said, "the marriage can only be approved (as far as my side is concerned), if your side agree to pay me a compensation known as *drian palit mata*, for the purpose of abolishing racial enmity between us."

Entingi promptly agreed; he furthermore claimed that he had no malice in his heart, neither had he any territorial ambition other than to defend the life of his people against the invading *Iban*. Eventually it was here that the Sea Dayaks were first called Iban *by the Bukitan*, due to the fact that they were pushing other races out and taking all into their possession.

Entingi furthermore assured Tindin that before long he would pay the *drian palit mata* as claimed—so that his son, Demong, could be allowed to make Rinda, Tindin's daughter, his legal wife.

In his further claim Tindin thought it would be proper for him to ask for a padi-bin full of new heads plus a brass gong be presented to him as a mark that he was not just an ordinary chief, but one of extraordinary authority who had the right to claim for dowry *drian* according to the tradition founded by Serapoh.

At the conclusion of their negotiations Entingi said that he agreed to all this; at the same time, he thought it would be proper to invite Tindin to come over with him to Paku, to see for himself the beauty and fertility of that district. The eager Tindin at once consented and took some of his leading warriors with him. In Paku, Entingi took Tindin round the district and eventually brought him to meet another Bukitan chief named Entigu, who then lived at the mouth of Gelu Penuan.

On this visit Tindin found that Entigu and his people were widely different in a variety of ways from Entingi's people. Entigu and his people were not "Bukitan Kampong" who did regularly farm, as did Entingi and his people. Before they moved away towards Julau and the Rejang, these Bukitans, under the leadership of Entigu, had twice suffered from the attacks of severe and sweeping "sakit puru" epidemic (smallpox). A third group was under chief Agam at the mouth of Gelu Penuan.

12: Haddon & Start E-4 (no date) 1936 OC6 Iban OC6

THE IBAN OR SEA DAYAKS

101 THE general appearance and psychical characteristics of the Iban have been well described by Hose and McDougall (I, p. 32, and measurements taken by Haddon are given in II, pp. 339, 340). They are industrious and energetic, and are great wanderers; this latter peculiarity struck the Kayans, who termed them "Ivan" (immigrant or wanderer), and this name has been adopted by large numbers of them in recent years and modified into Iban (II, p. 250). "When the Ibans became associated in piratical matters with the Malays of the coast, these latter assigned to their allies the heads of their enemies, as a sort of perquisite. This state of affairs lasted until well into the nineteenth century; and it is from their association with the Malays of the coast in their piratical expeditions that the Iban became known to Europeans as a Sea Dayak" (Hose, 1926, p. 145). The term Dayak, Dyak, etc., merely designates a non-Malayan inhabitant of Borneo and has no ethnic or tribal significance. It is probably derived from the Malay word *daya*, "inland".

174 The Iban can be distinguished from the other peoples of Borneo by their physical and mental traits and by many differences in culture. There appear to be two main ethnic stocks in Borneo: (1) a narrow-headed type, often termed Indonesian, but, to avoid ambiguity, the term Nēsiōt is preferable (Haddon, 1929, pp. 22, 119); (2) a broad-headed type, Proto-Malay (or Oceanic Mongol), which is a branch of the Pareoean or Southern Mongoloid (*l.c.* 1929, p. 32), to which stock the Iban may be assigned (cf. Haddon, 1901). Hose and McDougall (II, p. 248) regard the Iban as belonging to the same "stock from which the true Malays of Sumatra and the Peninsula were differentiated by the influence of Arab culture. A large number of the ancestors of the present Ibans were probably brought to Borneo from Sumatra less than two hundred years ago [Hose, 1926, p. 7, says, "less than three hundred years ago"]. . . . Some two centuries ago, a number of Malay nobles were authorised by the Sultan of Brunei to govern the five rivers of

174 Sarawak proper, namely, the Samarahan, the Sadong, the Batang Lupar, the Saribas, and the Klaka rivers. These Malays were pirate leaders, and they were glad to enrol large numbers of pagan fighting men among their followers. . . [they] found, no doubt, that their pagan relatives of Sumatra lent themselves more readily to this service than the less warlike Klemantans of Borneo, and therefore, as we suppose, they brought over considerable numbers of them and settled them about the mouths of these rivers". "It seems to us probable that the greater part of the ancestors of the Ibans entered Borneo in this way. But there is reason to think that some of them had settled at an earlier date in this part of Borneo and rather farther southward on the Kapuas River. . . . In most respects they closely resemble the other Iban tribes, but they are distinguished by some peculiarities of language and accent; their manners are gentler, their bearing less swaggering; they are less given to wandering" (II, p. 249).

We are not in a position to criticize the supposition that some 200 or 300 years ago Malay chiefs introduced Iban warriors from Sumatra to Sarawak, but Hose and McDougall recognize an earlier population of Iban in Borneo. It seems doubtful whether the characteristic Iban culture is so recent as Hose and McDougall seem to imply, and it would be interesting to know from what part of Sumatra "their pagan relatives" came, and if there are any traces there now of such people. We suggest that the Iban migration into Borneo may be regarded as an early wave of the movements that culminated in the Malay Empire.

Hose and McDougall (I, p. 31) state that the Iban "have spread northwards over Sarawak during the latter half of the last century, chiefly from the region of the Batang Lupar, where they are still numerous. They are still spreading northward, encroaching upon the more peaceful Klemantan tribes. They are most densely distributed in the lower reaches of the main 162 rivers of Sarawak, especially the Batang Lupar and Saribas rivers, which are now exclusively occupied by them; but they are found also in scattered communities throughout almost all parts of Sarawak, and even in British North Borneo, and they extend from their centre in Sarawak into the adjacent regions of Dutch Borneo, which are drained by the northern tributaries 101 of the Great Kapuas River". The different tribes or groups of Iban are 619 distinguished by the names of the rivers along which they dwell, thus they

are known as Batang Lupar, Saribas, Rejang, Kanowit, etc. The physical characters of the various ethnic groups in Sarawak are described by Haddon in an Appendix to Hose and McDougall's monograph.

IBAN COSTUME

The Iban are extremely fond of dress and both men and women wear many ornaments as well.

The usual male attire consists of:

Sirat (*chawat* of the Malays), or waist cloth, usually of red or blue cotton cloth, sometimes having an embroidered end made of native material.

Labong, a headkerchief, which is usually richly decorated; or a cap of woven cane, both of which are often ornamented with feathers.

Takai buriet or seat mat, usually made of skin or cane matting, the edge being finished off with cloth and beads or buttons.

Kalambi or jacket, with or without sleeves, used chiefly on ceremonial occasions.

Dangdong or shawl is also sometimes worn over the shoulder.

The women wear:

Bidang or petticoat, reaching to the knees and usually made of home-made cloth elaborately decorated with warp-dyed patterns.

Bedong or woman's waist band or girdle.

Rawai or corset, made of a series of split ratan rings upon which brass rings are threaded. The ratan rings fit so tightly that it is difficult to bend the body.

Kalambi or jacket, sometimes rather longer than the men's but of the same shape.

Girdles of coins, silver and brass chain or strips of coloured cane are also worn round the waist, and *tanggok* or necklaces of beads, cane and silver coins round the throat. Heavy earrings in the distended lobe of the ears are worn by most tribes.

Some idea of the women's costume can be gathered from the frontispiece, which shows a group of four women and two children. The women are wearing skirts, *bidang*, with patterns; spider designs can be seen on the